

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, March 14, 2003

PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Chief Ramsey this week testified before the DC Council's Committee on the Judiciary in support of two pieces of legislation designed to improve criminal investigations and case closure rates by raising experience levels within the MPDC's detective ranks. One bill would create a Senior Detectives program, allowing the Department to hire back qualified retired MPDC detectives, without their having to forfeit retirement benefits. The second bill would create a Lateral Detectives program, allowing the MPDC to hire experienced detectives from other law enforcement agencies. (The MPDC currently has "senior" and "lateral" programs for police officers.) The small number of experienced detectives hired under these programs would investigate homicides and other serious crimes, review open cases, and provide critical training and mentoring to less experienced members as they move up the ranks. In his testimony, the Chief emphasized that the two programs are not intended to deny promotional opportunities to current members, but rather to complement existing investigators by adding important experience and institutional knowledge that could be passed on to future detectives.

① Read the Chief's complete statement at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/stmts/2003/03/031103.shtm>

① Learn more about the MPDC's Lateral Officer program by visiting:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/polateral.shtm>

CCTV CAMERAS ACTIVATED DURING ANTI-WAR PROTESTS

The MPDC is deploying Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras on March 15 to assist with crowd management and public safety during a permitted anti-war demonstration in downtown DC organized by International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism). In addition to activating its network of 14 existing cameras, the MPDC will deploy up to nine additional cameras on a temporary basis along the march route, which runs generally from the Washington Monument, past the White House and US Department of Justice, and returning to the Monument grounds. The CCTV system is a secure, wireless network of 14 cameras that focus on public spaces around the National Mall and downtown DC, with the capability of incorporating additional cameras on a temporary basis. The system is activated during major events or periods of heightened alert for terrorism. CCTV camera feeds are displayed in the MPDC's Joint Operations Command Center (JOCC) at Police Headquarters. The MPDC's use of CCTV is designed to ensure the protection of personal privacy rights. The network provides video images of public spaces only, and has no audio capability.

① For more information about the March 15 deployment, visit:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=1966>

① Additional information about the CCTV network, including the locations of the 14 permanent cameras, can be found at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=1966>

DC Municipal Regulations require the MPDC to provide public notice of the deployment of CCTV cameras. Individuals may submit written comments regarding the CCTV system to the Chief of Police, Metropolitan Police Department, 300 Indiana Avenue, NW, Room 5080, Washington, DC, 20001, or via email: chief@mpdc.org.

FEBRUARY PHOTO ENFORCEMENT DATA SHOW CONTINUED TRAFFIC SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

The number of motorists running red lights and speeding aggressively continued to decline in February, according to the latest data from the MPDC's automated traffic enforcement programs. Red-light cameras in the District detected fewer than 9,700 violations during February, one of the lowest monthly totals since the program began in August 1999. There are now 27,700 fewer red-light violations each month at the intersections equipped with cameras—a reduction of more than 73 percent. Similarly, the percentage of vehicles caught speeding aggressively by the MPDC's photo radar program declined to just over 7 percent in February, the lowest monthly percentage yet. Of the 295,000 vehicles monitored by photo radar during the month, fewer than 21,000 were found to be exceeding the program's threshold, or 7.1 percent of all vehicles. That compares with nearly 31 percent of vehicles that were speeding aggressively in July 2001, during the initial deployment of the photo radar vehicles.

① For more information about red-light cameras, including a map showing the 39 DC intersections with cameras, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtm>

① For more information about photo radar, including a map of the enforcement zones, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtm>

MPDC ISSUES WARNING ON POLICE IMPOSTER

The MPDC is investigating a recent robbery in Northeast in which the suspect posed as a police officer, handcuffed the victim and stole his property. The suspect, dressed in civilian clothes, identified himself as a police officer by displaying a badge. Unfortunately, police badges (or imitations of them) are readily available to the public and can be used illegally by police imposters. The MPDC offers the following tips to residents who are uncomfortable or unsure about whether someone who claims to be a police officer is indeed an officer. First, ask to see the individual's identification card, not simply a badge. All MPDC officers carry identification cards (with photos) and are instructed to display them if asked. Second, if you are still unsure, ask the individual to radio for a uniformed officer to respond to the scene. Finally, ask to see a supervisor. And if you are victimized by a police imposter, please call 9-1-1 as soon as it is safe to do so. Only with the public's cooperation can the MPDC identify and apprehend police imposters.

NEWS & NOTES

Chatting with the Chief. Chief Ramsey takes phone calls from 6:40–7 pm on Tuesday, March 18, during his regular monthly radio program on WHUR 96.3-FM.

Street Sweeping Resumes March 17. DC motorists are reminded that mechanical street sweeping resumes on March 17, following the traditional winter hiatus. Note that parking fines for violating street sweeping regulations have increased this year from \$20 to \$30.

US Commission on Civil Rights Hearing. Chief Ramsey will join other DC officials in testifying before the Commission on efforts by the city and the MPDC to improve services to and relations with DC's Latino communities. Scheduled for Friday, March 21.

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 3/14/03)

- 2003: 44

- 2002: 44

- % Change: Unchanged

Arrests (week ending 3/8/03)

- Total: 846

- Drugs: 122

Firearm Recoveries (as of 3/12/03)

- Total: 385

- Marrrch 50

Traffic Fatalities (as of 3/14/03)

- 2003: 7

- 2002: 14

- % Change: -50.0%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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